

PROJECT

FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ACADEMY
TO BE CALLED

THE HIGH SCHOOL OF MONTREAL,

In which provision shall be made for a more Enlarged and Liberal Course of Education, on a Scale commensurate with that of similar Schools in the principal Cities of the Parent Country.

TO make a suitable and sufficient provision for the education of youth is, in every community, a paramount object of public interest. The development of the mind is, in fact, the development of all the resources of a country, natural, moral, and political; and consequently takes its place at the head of all other means of public good. This is the true foundation of the power, prosperity, virtue, glory of a nation; for knowledge is power, and mind is the great spring of all that enlightens, exalts, and humanizes mankind. It is not enough that a due provision be made for the general and elementary instruction of youth; but whenever there is, in any community, a considerable portion of the citizens able and willing to be at the expence of imparting a higher kind or larger measure of intellectual culture and refinement to their children, it is the duty and interest of the community at large to establish suitable institutions for the fulfilment of this end. It is out of the more opulent families of such a society that the learned professions are, for the most part, filled. This portion of the youth are, consequently, the chief hope of their country—destined to be the teachers, the judges, the magistrates, the legislators, the conductors, of the press, the literati of their day and generation; and in some one or other of these various capacities and functions, they will be called, in after life, to preside over all the great departments of public business,—to direct all the great movements of the social and political machinery,—to watch over, enlighten, and influence public opinion,—determining, in a principal degree, by their talents, intelligence, learning, and virtue, the rank and reputation of their country among the nations of the earth. To provide a sufficient education for this portion of our youth is an object of supreme and universal interest, and lies at the very foundation of the well being of our city, and, therefore, of our country, of which this city is, without all question, the centre and heart. An institution to fulfil this all-important end, is of such magnitude and importance to the public, that it must not be left to the moulded and fashioned according to the self-will and interested views of any one sect or party; but should be framed upon principles, and administered in a spirit, which will be equally beneficial and satisfactory to all, whose means enable them, to avail themselves of the advantages which it offers. It is better, therefore, that such a design should originate with and emanate from those, for whose benefit the institution is mainly established, and who have, therefore, the greatest interest in its reputation and success—who can have no temptation to consult any interest but that of the institution, seeking that plan for its foundation, and that course for its conduct and administration, which shall be most effectual for the accomplishment of the end.

Actuated by these views, and impressed with a deep conviction of the utility and value of such a

£500 currency per annum. The other three masters should also be accomplished scholars and experienced teachers, and their salaries ought not to be less than £300 or £250 per annum. It will be desirable—and on this point the advice of the nominees will be of great value—to identify, as far as possible, the interests of the Masters with those of the institution, by making the rate of their salaries to depend upon the prosperity of the Seminary.

The following gentlemen are appointed to give full information of the views of the projectors to such as may be interested and to call upon who shall receive this Prospectus, or who may favor the design, for their patronage and subscriptions:—ALEX. BUCHANAN, Esq., Advocate, B. HOLMES, Esq., DR. McCULLOCH, WM. LUNN, Esq., J. G. McKENZIE, Esq., D. FISHER, Esq., Advocate, and JAMES FERRIER, Esq.

When it appears that a sufficient number of subscribers has been obtained, a general meeting of them will be called, finally to complete the work, by sending home a letter of attorney to the nominees, with instructions to frame the model, and to appoint the teachers, and send them out with all convenient speed.

Montreal, 24th March, 1842.

EXPOSITION OF THE PLAN OF
THE PROJECTED HIGH SCHOOL
OF MONTREAL.

IN pursuance of the design already announced to the public in the printed Prospectus which the Projectors of the HIGH SCHOOL OF MONTREAL have recently issued and circulated, the following explanatory statement is respectfully submitted to the attention of the public, preparatory to the call which will be made forthwith upon all who are favorable to the design and interested in its success, to become subscribers.

The great aim of the originators of the Project for the Establishment of a Seminary to be called "The High School of Montreal," is to provide a system of Education for our youth, who are destined for the liberal professions or the higher walks of life and business, upon a more comprehensive scale, and with greater efficiency in the practical conduct and administration, than can possibly be attained in private Schools and Academies however respectable. With this view they have been induced, after mature and impartial consultation, to give a decided preference to the general model of the best Schools in Scotland, as being in their judgment and without any disparagement to other Schools and systems, best adapted both in their plan and working to the present condition of society in Canada.

This will be readily admitted by all who are acquainted with the characteristic merits of the Scottish system of Education.

In the first place, it is eminently practical and fitted to qualify those who go through its complete discipline and training for all the offices and duties of active life. In the second place, it is comprehensive and complete in the range of the studies which it embraces. It gives no undue preference or disproportionate attention to Classical, over Mathematical and Scientific learning. It gives to each of the great branches of a liberal Education its due place and just proportion of time and culture. Nor is it the least recommendation of this

celebrated academy confessedly does, at the head of all the great public schools in that country; and they have further deemed it advisable, in conformity with the principle above stated, to commit the whole modelling of the projected seminary, as well as its management and administration, so far as the education is concerned, to the hands and heads of those who are professionally and experimentally familiar with the principles and the practice of the system. At the same time they desire to assure the public, that so far are they from entertaining any narrow or sectarian views, to which their whole plan is utterly repugnant, and every suspicion of which is set at rest at once by the simple enunciation of the fact, that among the originators and abettors of the design will be found not merely the members, but for the most part the very heads of every sect and representatives of almost every party of our population; that, on the other hand, they have the most earnest desire to transplant, as far as may be practicable, the peculiar excellencies of the English and Irish Schools, and to ingraft them into their institution. For this purpose they conceive that all due provision is made not only in the choice of the most enlightened and liberal minded nominees, to whom will be communicated the necessary instructions respecting the views of those interested and the peculiar circumstances of the country, but still more in the supreme power of the Proprietors and Directors together, to model according to their will and judgment the institution and the system, as well as to control and direct the teachers. Nor is it contemplated to follow servilely even the copy which they have selected, rather for their free imitation than literal transcription. In the present stage of the progress of society in this city and country, it must be obvious to all enlightened judges, that it is not merely a Classical and Mathematical School that is required to fulfil the great ends of education, for, in this case, the very best models might have been found in England and Ireland. The seminary now to be established must not merely be capable of accomplishing all the ends of a Classical and Mathematical School, but even still more, of providing a course of liberal instruction suited to that numerous and important class of our youth, who have not time or perhaps means to attend the University, but who, nevertheless, in the progress of life may be called to serve society and their country, in the most responsible and honorable stations and capacities demanding the highest intellectual qualifications in those who are worthy to aspire to them. Now it is a well known fact, that educational institutions, uniting all those distinct requisites, have long been in operation and repute, not only in all the great cities but in almost every Provincial town of any note in Scotland, whereas in the Sister Kingdoms they have only sprung up recently, have been transplanted from the former country, and in a great measure founded and conducted by natives of North Britain.

If the suggestions of the projectors, as set forth in the sketch printed herewith, of the basis of a constitution, which it is proposed to transmit to the nominees to serve as the groundwork of the scheme to be by them matured and perfected, be carried out, the institution as it is established for the education of our youth generally, will be constituted and conducted upon principles conformable with the views and interests of those who are most immediately concerned in its good government, efficiency and prosperity, and if the fundamental laws,

tested and approved the merits of the Institution and the system, in their actual working, the only aim at present (and to this our views ought to be confined,) is to do what is essential, for the most economical and compendious attainment of the end, by securing with all expedition accomplished masters for the School, and putting into prompt operation the course of instruction. In pursuance of this safe, simple and effectual course, it is their intention to call upon all the friends of Education, as well as of the honor and welfare of our city, to become subscribers, with the express understanding that every subscriber shall have a right to the benefit of the School, to the full amount of his contribution, and that this right shall be transferable, and that as soon as the subscriptions are completed, and adequate means thereby secured, a public meeting of all the subscribers shall be called by advertisement, for the prosecution of the ulterior measures which may be necessary for the final consummation of the project. In conclusion, the projectors would respectfully state, that, in their judgment, there is no enterprise that could be more worthy of the enlightened, patriotic, and munificent spirit of the citizens of Montreal,—that there is no monument which they could rear that would impress the world in our day with higher sentiments of respect and admiration for this community, or carry down to posterity a deeper sense of gratitude to the men of this age, as the benefactors of their city, and of their country, and as the enlightened friends and liberal patrons of Education and Letters.

FUNDAMENTAL RULES OF THE
CONSTITUTION OF THE HIGH
SCHOOL OF MONTREAL.

1. The Seminary shall be under the government of a Board of nine Directors, to be chosen annually by and out of the body of the subscribers whose annual contributions are not under ten pounds, currency, each.

2. The first three on the roll of Directors shall retire from office at the end of every successive year, and three new Directors shall be chosen in their stead, at a general meeting of the subscribers whose annual contributions are not under ten pounds, currency, each.

3. Every annual subscriber of ten pounds shall have one vote, a subscriber of twenty pounds two votes, and so on, adding one vote for every ten pounds of subscription.

4. It shall not be lawful for the Directors to make any new laws, or any changes in, or modifications of those that shall have been already enacted, affecting the system or conduct of education in the Seminary; but they shall merely have power to provide for enforcement of the established system and of the laws and regulations adopted by the general meetings of the whole body of subscribers qualified to vote, and they shall have authority, of their own accord, or at the request of any twelve of such subscribers to call a general meeting to consider of any change which may appear desirable in the existing laws or in the course of instruction.

5. As it is of very dangerous consequence to the best interests of the Seminary to allow of any rash innovation or intermeddling with the system of instruction when once fixed by men competent to that arduous and delicate task, no change shall be admitted in the plan of the school.

means enable them, to avail themselves of the advantages which it offers. It is better, therefore, that such a design should originate with and emanate from those, for whose benefit the institution is mainly established, and who have, therefore, the greatest interest in its reputation and success—who can have no temptation to consult any interest but that of the institution, seeking that plan for its foundation, and that course for its conduct and administration, which shall be most effectual for the accomplishment of the end.

Actuated by these views, and impressed with a deep conviction of the utility and value of such a Seminary, a considerable number of gentlemen in the persuasion that the time is now arrived when Montreal is capable of supporting it upon a scale worthy of the rank and dignity of the first city in British North America, have felt it their duty to come forward to submit to their fellow citizens the general plan of such an academy, which, if it happily obtain their approbation, will be expanded into its details and finally perfected by the master minds of those distinguished men whom, they would recommend, as nominees for this purpose, and to whose wisdom and experience they would entrust the complete modelling of the institution, as well as the appointment of the masters. The gentlemen whom they would recommend as worthy to be entrusted with this very arduous and important responsibility, are the Principal of the University of Edinburgh, Dr. Lee, Dr. Chalmers, Dr. Welsh, Professor Pillans, Dr. Carson, Rector of the High School, and Dr. Boyd. They conceive that the best model of an institution of this nature, adapted to the circumstances of Canada, is that of the High School of Edinburgh; but in suggesting this to the nominees as the best model for imitation, they by no means wish them to be fettered by adherence to it, or to copy servilely any model whatever, but are of opinion that they should be authorized and invested with full powers to frame, according to the united lights of their own experience and wisdom, the Plan of the Academy, and to nominate a Rector and three Masters, who shall be qualified to conduct it with ability and success.

It is the opinion of the originators of this project, that the institution should embrace all the elementary branches of a grammatical, classical, mathematical, and scientific education, after the model of the most improved seminaries of this order in the great cities of the Parent Country. They think it best to leave it to the distinguished men above named to define the several branches and to circumscribe the limits or the range of the studies in each, to be prescribed to the youth, whether as a complete education to fit them for active life, or as a preparation for the higher instruction of our Colleges. It is respectfully suggested by the authors of this Prospectus that the institution shall be under the management of a limited number of gentlemen, to be chosen by and out of the body of those who are most liberal and steady in its support, and that a certain amount of annual contribution or of donation shall constitute eligibility to this important office. It is also suggested, that the Rector or President of the institution shall be a scholar of reputation, eminently qualified, not only to fulfil the high trust of superintending and regulating the whole course of instruction, but also to shed a lustre over the institution by his talents and learning. His salary ought not to be less than

quainted with the characteristic merits of the Scottish system of Education.

In the first place, it is eminently practical and fitted to qualify those who go through its complete discipline and training for all the offices and duties of active life. In the second place, it is comprehensive and complete in the range of the studies which it embraces. It gives no undue preference or disproportionate attention to Classical, over Mathematical and Scientific learning. It gives to each of the great branches of a liberal Education its due place and just proportion, of time and culture. Nor is it the least recommendation of this system that while it is universally approved by the most enlightened and unbiassed judges, and has had its merits fully ascertained and attested by time and experience, it is more likely to find favor than any other with a very numerous, intelligent and influential body of our citizens, on whose support and patronage in a small degree, the establishment and success of the Institution, must depend. Another consideration that had some weight in deciding this preference, is the greater facility of obtaining eminent scholars, and able, faithful and laborious teachers, upon terms more economical from Scotland than from any other of the sister Kingdoms.

It cannot be disputed that the Education best suited to the general destination and views of the youth for whom this Seminary is designed is, just as in Scotland, that which shall fit them for active life, by laying a broad and solid foundation of general knowledge and intellectual accomplishment, in virtue of which they may be capable of rising to the highest usefulness and eminence, in all the relations and offices of civil life and business, in all the learned and liberal professions, in all the practical pursuits and employments which are connected with the manifold wants and exigencies of society.

In founding institutions of any description in a young and rising country, such as this, there is no course so safe and prudent, as that of framing them in conformity with the model of the best institutions of the same kind in older countries, which are placed in similar circumstances. Acting upon this principle, the authors of this project conceived that their wisest course would be to adopt some one approved model of undisputed excellence. Having little confidence in purely theoretic plans and constitutions, drawn from the fantastic combinations of an inventive imagination rather than from the storehouse of experience or framed and pieced together, into a patchwork out of various discordant terms and elements, they sought that unity in the spirit, plan and working of the institution which they could only reasonably hope to attain and secure by selecting and holding fast to some one model to which time and the judgment of the world had set their seal.

Impressed therefore with the conviction that they shall best realise their own views and fulfil the hopes of this community by transplanting, if with any, certainly very slight, modifications, the long tried and well tested system of the Schools of Scotland, which have filled every part of the British empire with their enlightened, exemplary, and enterprising alumni, they have unanimously concluded to adopt the special model of the system of the High School of Edinburgh as it has been recently enlarged and perfected, standing, as that of

country, and in a great measure founded and conducted by natives of North Britain.

If the suggestions of the projectors, as set forth in the sketch printed herewith, of the basis of a constitution, which it is proposed to transmit to the nominees to serve as the groundwork of the scheme to be by them matured and perfected, be carried out, the institution as it is established for the education of our youth generally, will be constituted and conducted upon principles conformable with the views and interests of those who are most immediately concerned in its good government, efficiency and prosperity, and if the fundamental laws, as exhibited in this outline or elementary sketch of a constitution, be vigorously enforced and steadily adhered to, there can be little hazard that the institution shall at any future period be perverted from its original design to become the mere tool or engine of a sect or of a faction. An institution founded upon this broad and popular basis cannot fail to command public confidence, and the permanent support and patronage of the community, while if it be in other respects unexceptionable, there can be no ground to apprehend the withholding or withdrawing of the aid and countenance of the Legislature or of the Executive government.

Every unprejudiced and public spirited citizen, who has at heart the best interests of the city, and of the country at large, and of the cause of Education, must rejoice in the erection of an Institution which, while it provides a complete course of liberal instruction sufficient for the accomplishment of the far greater portion of our youth, will be a nursery for the University, will aid, further and strengthen it, if it prove worthy of public confidence and favour, will stimulate emulation, will force improvement and have a powerful tendency to prevent or to correct, a narrow sectarian and illiberal spirit, on the part of the governors or of the professors of the College.

Indeed it has appeared to the gentlemen who have been the prime movers of this enterprise, that it is not one of its least recommendations to public favour and patronage, that in the event of the partial or absolute failure of the University of McGill College to fulfill the end of its institution, from the undue influence or ascendancy of any faction or cabal, it will be easy to extend and carry out the various departments of this Academy, so as to embrace the utmost range of the course of study usually pursued in Colleges, on this side of the Atlantic.

Such is the candid and unreserved exposition of the views of those with whom this project has originated, and such are the claims which the proposed Seminary presents to recommend it to public favor and confidence, and it now only remains that all, who are friendly to the object, unite and co-operate to further the accomplishment of a work in the successful issue of which the best interests of Education will be promoted, the welfare and celebrity of this great metropolis advanced, and provision made for giving a higher intellectual tone to the next generation in Canada. Nothing can be less hazardous or burdensome than the method which is now recommended for raising the ways and means. Leaving it to future time and experience to pave the way and to provide the means for the erection of a suitable edifice, when the community shall have fairly

vide for enforcement of the established system and of the laws and regulations adopted by the general meetings of the whole body of subscribers qualified to vote, and they shall have authority, of their own accord, or at the request of any twelve of such subscribers to call a general meeting to consider of any change which may appear desirable in the existing laws or in the course of instruction.

5. As it is of very dangerous consequence to the best interests of the Seminary to allow of any rash innovation or intermeddling with the system of instruction when once fixed by men competent to that arduous and delicate task, no change shall be admitted in the plan of the school, or in the subject or course of study, without the decision of three fourths of the subscribers, qualified to vote, present at a general meeting, called at the requisition of at least twelve such subscribers, by public advertisement, in all the principal journals of this city, not less than three months previously to the day of such general meeting.

6. When it shall happen that any question shall arise tending to effect any change in the subjects or course of study, it shall be announced in due time to the President or Rector of the school, and to all the head masters under him; and they shall be admitted to state their views and urge their objections, if not at the meetings of the Board of Directors, yet certainly at the general meeting, of the subscribers qualified to vote, called for the express purpose of discussing and determining such question.

7. Although it is necessary to reserve to the subscribers and directors the right to decide finally on all questions relating to the system of instruction and the discipline and government of the school, as well as its financial affairs, this power shall not be withdrawn, but as seldom as possible, from the hands of those who are best fitted to exercise it, namely, the President or Rector and the Teachers, there being an appeal from them to the Board and the Subscribers.

8. An Annual Report shall be prepared and submitted, by the Directors, to a general meeting of the subscribers to be holden on the day of , stating the number of the scholars in each class, of those who have entered and of those who have left the school, the amount of income, fees, subscriptions, donations, the amount of expenditure, together with a particular exposition of the changes or modifications of the permanent laws or constitution of the Seminary, and the reasons and grounds which have induced the Directors to adopt such alterations.

9. It being expedient that the interests of the President or Rector and of the Masters should as much as possible be identified with those of the institution, and be made to depend on its progress and prosperity, their salaries, at the expiry of the first three years, shall be made up of such proportion of the fees and other contributions as may be available after payment of the general expenditure of the year.

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Montreal, April 20, 1842.